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MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

BY

BENJAMIN RUSHFORTH.

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MISCELLANEOUS POEMS,

BY

BENJAMIN RUSHFORTH,

THE BLIND POET OF BOLTON.

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THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR OF BOLTON,

James Barlow, Esq.

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PREFACE.

The following simple productions were composed to beguile the tediousness of solitary hours, and were not intended for the press. By the advice of esteemed friends I have been induced to bring them before the public, to whose judgment I with diffidence submit them, hoping they will prove as great a blessing to the reader as they have been to the author.

I beg to thank my numerous friends for the encouragement I have received from them in their support of a former publication, and trust they will also approve of the present humble efforts of the muse.

69, *Parrot Street*,
August, 1869.

859759

TO

THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR OF BOLTON,

James Barlow, Esq.

HONOURED SIR,

Should I express my own feelings towards you, I should be accused of the meanest flattery by those who are unacquainted with your character; but I must confess, I was induced to solicit your permission to dedicate my humble work to you, by the high esteem in which you are held by all parties who have observed the gentlemanly and christian manner in which you have performed your public and private duties. Also, for the interest you have taken in the welfare of my afflicted brethren, who are deprived of the most precious of all physical faculties, as well as for your great kindness to myself as an individual.

I can say nothing of the merits of the work: there may be imperfections in it which, perhaps, might have been corrected had I been able to peruse it myself. I feel myself laid under an unspeakable obligation to you for permitting me to dedicate this work to you.

That your life and health may long be spared, and that you may still be the honoured instrument in the hand of God in dispensing the gifts of His providence for His glory, until you hear the welcome sound, "Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," is the earnest prayer of

Your humble and obedient servant,

BENJAMIN RUSHFORTH.

INDEX.

1.—The Snow Storm - - 9
2.—The Watery Grave - - 15
3.—The Slave Ship - - 19
4.—The Insolent Coach-Horse - 24
5.—The Weaver - - - 28
6.—The Nun - - - - 33
7.—Abraham Offering up Isaac - 46
8.—David and Goliath - - 50
9.—The Three Hebrew Children - 53
10.—The Prodigal Son - - 57
11.—The Sabbath - - - 62
12.—The Beatitudes - - - 82
13.—Paraphrase on Psalm i. - 91
14.—Paraphrase on Psalm c. - - 92
15.—Psalm ciii. *v* 13 - - 94
16.—Psalm lv. *v* 22 - - - 96
17.—Take no thought for the morrow 98
18.—What shall it profit a man, &c. - 99
19.—Go ye into the highways, &c. - 101
20.—Lines to Mr. and Mrs. Street - 102

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE SNOW STORM.

It was a dark December's day,
And snow-plum'd Boreas winged his way
Wild whistling o'er the waste,
And nature wore her aspect drear,—
A young pedestrian traveller
Climbed yon mountain's breast.

His path was slippery and steep,
Through heath and o'er morasses deep,
Buried in snow; yet still
He urged on his way and strain'd
His ev'ry nerve, until he gain'd
The summit of the hill.

And yet his speed he slacken'd not,
Until he reach'd a shelter'd spot,
Where isolated stood,
As if to cheer the cheerless plain,
A cottage, where an humble swain
Had fixed his abode.

Its tenant from the window spied
The stranger, and threw open wide
His hospitable door,
And thus unto the youth did say,
"Why wendest thou on such a day
Across this desert moor?"

"My native place," the youth replied,
"Is on this mountain's other side,
And I am homeward bound:
For where is found the spot on earth
So dear as that which gave us birth?
Our homes are hallow'd ground.

"Five years have run their tedious race
Since from a mother's fond embrace
I tore myself away,
To tempt the deep blue briny wave,
To wrestle with the storm, and brave
The perils of the sea.

"That mother and two sisters fair,
And one still to this heart more dear,
Now wait for my return;
You will not wonder then that I
The winter's bitter blast defy,
And ev'ry danger scorn.

"I wonder not," the swain replied,
"But, O, let reason be thy guide,
'Tis madness to go on:
Thy path is buried deep in snow,
And soon the sun will be below
The western horizon.

"As dark as pitch this night will be,
No moon will lend her light to thee,
No star can pierce the gloom;
With us till morn make thine abode,
For mark thee well, yon gath'ring cloud
It is the tempest's own.

"And it brooks not the least restraint,
E'en now it struggles to give vent
To its tremendous ire:
And soon 'twill burst from its confines,
And woe to him whom fate consigns
To feel its vengeance dire.

"If once thou leav'st our cot behind,
No other shelter can'st thou find
To screen thee from its wrath;
With us then make thyself content,
When 'tis too late thou may'st repent,
If thou persu'st thy path."

"I thank you, friend," replied the youth—
"I thank you, friend, and I in truth
Must own your counsel good;
But I must still pursue my course,
Though all the elemental force
Across my pathway stood.

For I have learn'd to laugh at storms,
Array'd in their most fearful forms,
By grim death marshalled;
Oft when the tempest's ruthless blast
Has made the sturdy giant mast
Bow like a bruised reed.

"When flashing through the midnight air,
The forked light'ning's vivid glare
Made darkness still more dark;
When the wild billow's deaf'ning roar
Has bounded from a rugged shore,
To leeward of our bark.

"When on the bosom of each wave,
Which passing by some sea-man brave,
Has made his winding sheet,—
Then to the helm have I been lash'd,
And seen unmoved the bulwarks dash'd
In splinters at my feet.

"On every side, above, beneath,
In threat'ning attitude, has Death
At me oft ghastly grinn'd;
And shall I then on firm dry land
A moment hesitating stand,
Fear'd by the winter's wind?

"Or if the night should, as you say,
Be dark and cheerless, and my way
In snow be buried deep;
Or if the gathering hurricane
Should issue forth o'er hill and plain,
With desolating sweep;

"The darkness of the night I'll brave,
No mercy from the storm I'll crave,
My toilsome track I'll tread,
Protected by that gracious pow'r,
Which hitherto in peril's hour,
From harm has screen'd my head.

"My thanks again I must repeat,
Your kindness I shall not forget,
So now, my friend, good night."
Thus said the traveller, once more
Resumed his journey as before,
And soon was out of sight.

Scarce had he left the shepherd's home
A short half-mile, when coming from
A pathway to his right,
Another traveller appear'd:
The sight his youthful bosom cheer'd,
And made his toils more light.

But soon more tedious was the road,
A rude low wall of granite stood
Its bound on either side:
But these were so concealed now,
That all appear'd a field of snow,
Bleak, desolate, and wide.

They travell'd on in company,
Until the tempest-laden sky
More threat'ning still became,
And night came on,—and such a night
Since time began his ceaseless flight
Ne'er veil'd creation's frame.

'Twas as the shepherd had foretold,
As dark as pitch; and still more cold
Did blow the northern blast;
And wildly did the tempest wail,
And rain, and sleet, and snow, and hail,
In turns were falling fast.

And now the head-strong youth began
The friendly counsels of the swain
To call unto his mind:
And, of his reason half bereft,
Repented he had ever left
His cheerful cot behind.

For quite exhausted was his frame,
And stiffen'd ev'ry limb became,
Benumbed by the frost.
And drowsiness o'ertook him now,
The blood crept through its channels slow,
And ev'ry hope was lost.

Each step he slackened still his speed,
Until unable to proceed,
Upon the ground he fell;
Fast ebbed now the tide of life,
Nature had almost ceas'd her strife,
Yet home appeared still.

His every thought to occupy,
And thus, almost inaudibly,
His comrade he address'd:—
"Go, tell my mother that her son
His short career on earth has run
That he is now at rest:

"And tell her that my filial love,
Not the cold hand of death could move,
And that the ardent prayer
Which from my dying lips did break,
Was that Omnipotence would make
Her His especial care.

"And tell my sisters not to mourn
The fate of him whom death has borne
Unto a happier shore;
And bid them wipe their weeping eyes,
And they shall meet me in the skies,
Where we shall part no more.

"Another favour yet I have
Most earnestly from you to crave.
It is my last request.
A sigh escap'd him as he spoke;
He press'd his comrade's hand, and took
A packet from his breast.

"Bear this," continued he "to her
Who long has been to me more dear
Than all the earth beside"—
He would have added more, but now
Death stamp'd his signet on his brow.
And with these words he died.

THE WATERY GRAVE.

A STATELY bark, which bravely had withstood
The hurricane's rude blast, and skimm'd the flood
Undaunted midst the elemental war,
Now homeward wends her course from climates far
Beyond the tropics, and is cleaving now
The vast Atlantic with her gallant prow.
Silence uninterrupted and profound
Presides on board, save when the solemn sound
Of the capp'd bell at intervals does break
Her peaceful reign midway between the deck.

And topmast-head her ensign we behold
Float on the breeze in many a mournful fold.
The crew are met beside the lee gang-way,
The last sad tribute of respect to pay
To one whose corpse was on the gratings laid;
Whose spotless soul her joyful wings had spread,
And far beyond life's boist'rous waves had fled.
The fun'ral rites perform'd, the briny deep
Entombs the corpse. In peace there may'st thou
sleep,
Safe shielded from the shafts which Destiny
Has with relentless hand long hurled at thee.
Scarce had'st thou unto manhood's age attain'd,
Ere thou receivest from the very hand
Which should have sooth'd thy woes and cheer'd
thy heart,
A wound, inflicted in the tender'st part.
Thou left'st thy native land, thy much-loved home,
A stranger in a foreign clime to roam,
In hopes that there, perhaps, thou might'st beguile
Thy grief: thou trodd'st in dust and scorching soil,
Beneath the tropic's sun thy form did broil:
Till time had skinn'd not heal'd thy mental sore,
And now the hand that gave it is no more.
Again does hope with her enliv'ning ray,
Pierce through the cloud that has obscur'd thy day;
Again in fancy thou behold'st the place
So dear to thee—the scene of happier days—
And mem'ry brings before thine eyes again
Thy youthful pleasures, but conceals the pain.
With them commingled now the vessel spreads
Her whiten'd canvass to the breeze, and speeds

Across the azure deep; and India's coast
Is in the ditsance seen, and now 'tis lost
Beyond the horizon; and now Ceylon
Is in the distance seen, but soon 'tis gone,
Far o'er the larboard quarter. Now the gale
More briskly blows, and fills each well trimm'd sail;
And from the lofty billow's foaming peak
She braves the perils of the Mosambique.
Then Africa's promontory she rounds,
And northward lightly o'er the wave she bounds.
When like a speck on the horizon's verge,
From Neptune's aqueous bed they see emerge
Helena's Isle, and thitherward she steers,
And soon before its sterile front appears.
Formal permission gain'd, her anchor drops
The cables length, and now thou climb'st the tops
Of the grey rocks, and visitest the place
Where Great Napoleon pass'd his latest days.
Again the bark is under weigh—again
She leaves the Isle, and flies across the main:
Yet still each moment to thine anxious mind
Appears an age, by thy ill stars design'd
To keep thee back from thy lov'd native shore.
Alas! its coast thou never seest more.
The hand of death—unfeeling death—hath stemm'd
The purple current. Thy bright eye, which beam'd
With rays of friendship's ever hallow'd spark,
Is in its socket lustreless and dark.
Thy noble heart, the warmest and the best
That ever beat within a mortal's breast,
Vibrates no more. Beneath the briny deep,
Hundreds of fathoms, dost thou sweetly sleep.

Could sterling worth, intrinsic excellence,
Child-like simplicity, and solid sense,
Or unassuming modesty, combined
With genius of no ordinary kind—
Could these have turn'd Death's ruthless shafts aside,
Or bribed his hand, then Stanton had not died.
Then the blue wave had not entomb'd my friend,
Nor had I mourned thine untimely end.
But rest in peace, within some coral bow'r
Bestrewn with gems, form'd by the magic pow'r
Of Amphytrite. Rest on thy pearly bed,
Rest undisturbed—rest thee free from dread
Of the wild tempest which is over head,
Sending the waves to quench the light'ning's glare;
Rolling the thunder through the trembling air;
Hurling proud navies on the rugged strand;
And spreading terror over sea and land.
The vessel leaves thee, and the hardy crew
Wipe off the tears which copiously bedew
Their manly cheeks, and now the cloud-crown'd
height
Of Teneriffe arises on the sight,
Contemptuous smiling as the billows wage
Eternal warfare, and exhaust their rage
Against its moveless base in harmless spray,
And homeward still the vessel bends her way.
And now o'er Biscay's boist'rous Bay she flies,
And all the fury of its flood defies:
Now she ascends the Alpine billows steep,
Again she dives into the wat'ry deep.
The angry waves her yard-arms nobly rake,
Nor do her well bound timbers deign to make

One sign of dread, but onward still she bounds,
And "Land a-head!" soon from aloft resounds.
From stem to stern the joyful tidings flew,
And Albion's chalky cliffs rise on their view.
Now unpropitious blow the northern gales,
And up the channel heavily she sails:
But through the friendship of successive tides,
Off Brighton's coast the Bengal Merchant rides.
Alas! she brings not our long-absent friend:
A letter comes, but not by Stanton penn'd.
It bears the tidings that beneath the deep
Thine eyes are clos'd in everlasting sleep.
Peace to thine ashes then. Sleep on in peace,
Till the Archangel shall command the seas
To give thee back. Sleep, till the welcome day
When thy pure soul again shall join its clay;
And, reunited, thou from earth shall rise
To claim thy mansion in the upper skies.

THE SLAVE SHIP.

'Twas evening, and the tropic's sun
Had his diurnal labour done,
When, lo, on Gambia's silv'ry tide
A bark was faintly seen to glide.
A christian nation's flag she bears,
Alas! no christian task is her's.
O! no, for she has dared to brave
The perils of the angry wave,
To mar the happiness of man,
Each social bond to rend in twain:

To make the parent childless, and
With lamentation fill the land:
To wrench the youth and maiden from
Their friends, their kindred, and their home;
And, with relentless hand, to drag
Them to the place where freedom's flag
Has by oppression long been furl'd—
The darkest spot of this dark world.
If you can bear the sickening view,
A moment look upon her crew:
Demons in human form are they,
Upon each countenance you may
See Villain stamped, deep as the stain
Imprinted on the brow of Cain.
But, hark! the wailing of despair,
Borne on the breeze, falls on the ear;
And to the shore we turn our eyes
From whence proceed those piercing cries.
And there a wretched group we see,
Of either sex promiscuously,
Plac'd side by side, together chain'd,
And forced from their native land;
Forc'd from the land which gave them birth,
To them the dearest spot on earth;
For they, though savage, love their home;
The place where they were wont to roam,
Free and unfetter'd as the air,
Is by the strongest ties made dear.
No wonder then they should let loose
The doleful notes of sorrow thus,
As o'er the rippling waves they glide
Until they reach the vessel's side.

Now in the hold are they immur'd,
And under hatches well secur'd;
And under covert of the night
She from the Gambia takes her flight.
Propitious seem to blow the gales,
As o'er the deep she swiftly sails,
They, as the morning breaks, discern
Another ship two leagues astern;
And all hearts fail when they descry
The British ensign, floating high
Upon the stranger's topmast head.
In haste their canvass all is spread
And, quick as the electric stream,
Does she the ocean's bosom skim;
Whilst her pursuer does not fail
To shake the reefs from ev'ry sail.
They, with unceasing labour, strive
To overtake the fugitive;
But all their efforts seem in vain,
For scarce a cable's length they gain.
But England's sons will ever be
Resolv'd to set the fetter'd free:
And onward still their course to steer
Until the twilight shades appear.
And now the clouds assume a form
Indicative of coming storm:
The Britons, with the utmost care,
For its forthcoming rage prepare;
To ev'ry cord and spar they look,
The sails are furl'd, their topmast struck.
And loud the tempest's voice is heard,
On high the billow's crests are rear'd,

The spray far o'er the mast-head flies,
Thick sable clouds o'erspread the skies;
At intervals the light'ning's glare
Illuminates the hemisphere;
The thunder's loudest peals find vent,
And rend the spacious firmament;
Destruction, clad in all his might,
Appears to claim his throne this night.
The Britons know their cause is just,
And they with confidence can trust
In Him, who bids the waves be still,
And they obey His Sovereign will.
The light'ning's blaze brings them no fear,
Unmov'd the thunder's roar they hear,
Calmly they meet the billow's wrath,
And through its foam pursue their path.
The night was past. At morn's first dawn
Their notice to the bark was drawn,
Which they the day before had chas'd;
But all that could of her be trac'd
Was but a wreck. Her helm unshipp'd,
Her canvass from the yard-arms stript,
Her main-mast carried by the board,
With scarcely one unbroken cord:
Into her hold the water breaks,
Through several long extended leaks:
Her bulwarks into splinters riven,
And, as the winds may drive her, driven
O'er the rough surface of the sea.
A rocky shore hard on her lee—
The boats are launch'd, in which the crew
Toward the shore their way pursue.

But He, to whom revenge belongs,
Takes ample vengeance for the wrongs
Which these, who bear the christian name,
Have done the sable sons of Ham.
The boats upon the rocks have struck,
Despair is seen in ev'ry look;
Now they rebound, then strike again;
They cry for help, but cry in vain;
For while they cry, a mighty wave
Bears them into a wat'ry grave.
The Britons board the sinking wreck,
And haste the captives' chains to break.
But 'tis not in the pow'r of pen
Or pencil to describe the scene.
In pity to their hapless lot,
To numbers Death had freedom brought;
They who remain'd are placed where
The tyrant's hand they need not fear—
Where gen'rous British hearts can feel
When Wretchedness makes her appeal;
And British arms the wrongs redress
Of those whom tyrants would oppress.
Then, hail! Britannia, blessed Isle,
May Heaven on thee propitious smile:
For ever more may'st thou retain
Thine empire o'er the briny main:
Long may the olive branch be seen
Entwined with thy laurels green:
Thy well-tried sword be bared never,
Save when it is unsheath'd to sever
The fetters which are forg'd to bind
The human body or the mind.

THE INSOLENT COACH-HORSE.

One morning, from the southern sky
The rain fell fast and furiously,
When I, Misfortune's firstborn—I,
Poor luckless wight—
Compell'd by cold necessity,
In piteous plight,

Acting the horse's toilsome part,
With wearied limbs and cheerless heart,
Was dragging through the streets a cart;
Drench'd to the skin,
And ancle deep in mire and dirt,
Both thick and thin,—

Picture of wretchedness complete.
As thus I trudg'd with wood-shod feet,
A splendid equipage I met,
Drawn by a pair
Of horses black as jet, and fleet
As mountain deer.

One of them, as he passed by,
Snorted as if contemptuously,
And, with his foot, splash'd in mine eye
A patch of mud.
Deep stung at this indignity,
Amaz'd I stood.

Quick through my veins the life-stream flew,
And ting'd my pale cheek with its hue,
My sleave across mine eye I drew
To clean it out.

The coach was then beyond my view,
And I in thought,

Was murm'ring at relentless Fate,
Who destin'd me the lot I hate,
Nor deigned once to mitigate
The stern decree.
O how degrading is the state
Of penury!

In pomp and splendour others roll,
And deeply drink from Pleasure's bowl,
And ev'ry wish form'd in the soul—
Elate with pride—
Without restriction or control,
Is gratified.

Their calls a servile train attend,
On ev'ry side they find a friend,
From whom incessant strains ascend
Of flattery.
Their tables with rich dainties bend
From far and nigh.

While I am forc'd to cut and carve,
And craze my brain, and strain my nerve;
Yet, after all, it will not serve
Mine urgent wants.
In indigence I still must starve,
And make my plaints,

An object of contempt and scorn:
Merely because a garment torn
And visage wan, and beard unshorn—

Save once a week—
And looks dejected and forlorn,
My rank bespeak.

Thinking me a mere biped ass,
This beast, high-mettled, could not pass,
But he must offer insult base
Beyond degree.
Without precedent, must my case
Distressing be.

Thus far, in melancholy strain
Had I soliloquised, when
Sudden arose within my brain,
Another string
Of thoughts, which taught me to restrain
My murmuring.

Let those who boast their glittering ore,
And, from the pinnacle of pow'r,
On me contempt and insult show'r,
Examine well,
Whether their state or mine be more
Desirable.

If they no other cause can show
Than poverty, then let them throw
Their sneers, and I, with dauntless brow,
Their scorn will brave.
At least, in spirit they shall know
I am no slave.

'Tis true, no downy couch is mine,
On sumptuous fare I never dine,

Nor can I with Oporto's wine
My soul elate:
No menial slaves in liv'ries fine
My calls await.

But undisturbed I can rest
With groans of those by me oppress'd,
No thoughts of hirelings haunt my breast
Whom I have wrong'd:
Nor the distress of the distress'd
Have I prolong'd.

Give me a conscience free from stain,
A soul that spurns oppression's gain,
A heart where peace holds constant reign,
Guarded by truth:
Then let my passage o'er life's main
Be rough or smooth,

Safe shall my little vessel sail,
In spite of ev'ry adverse gale,
And not a bolt or timber fail,
Or cord, or mast,
Till, with a shout of joy, I hail
My port at last.

While, with a pitying eye, I look
Upon some distant leeward rock,
Where those, who once presum'd to mock
Mine humble craft,
Are founder'd, and in splinters broke,
From fore to aft.

THE WEAVER.

'Twas night, and bleak December's blast
Was whistling loud and shrill;
The snow, descending thick and fast,
Had mantled plain and hill:

When round a weaver's cheerless fire,
His shiv'ring children sat;
And at his loom their wretched sire
Was murm'ring at his fate.

Fast down the mother's cheeks did steal
The silent tear of woe;
She felt as none but mothers feel,
Andonly mothers know.

Four little ones were at her side,
Loud clammering for bread;
Alas! their wants were unsupplied,
For she could give no aid.

The fifth was hanging at her breast—
That breast was milkless drain'd;
And on her pale face was impress'd
The mark of famine's brand.

And in one corner on the floor,
Some straw was thinly spread;
Their coverlet the rags they wore—
This was their only bed.

But vain mine efforts to pourtray
This soul-distracting scene;
No food, save one coarse crust, that day
Within their house had been.

Awhile the father left his loom,
His wearied limbs to rest;
He look'd around the naked room,
And anguish fill'd his breast:

For supperless, fatigu'd, alone,
He had to work all night;
To-morrow would his work be done,
And then the hard-earn'd mite—

His six days labour's scanty price—
With due frugality,
Would not his stern necessities
For half that space supply.

The children on their bed are laid,
The mother by their side;
And still—but still in vain—for bread
The children loudly cried.

They wept, till on the arms of sleep,
A brief respite was brought;
They wept, till they no more could weep,
Their hunger they forgot.

The mother slept not; balmy rest
Fled from her eyelids far;
Conflicting passions in her breast
Wag'd an incessant war.

Now Hope some comfort would impart,
And tell her that the morn
Would bring relief: this cheer'd the heart
By grief so rudely torn.

But when she thought how brief the space
Which that relief would last,
Then were Hope's bright illusive rays
By black Despair o'ercast.

The weaver in soliloquy,
While busied at his loom;
Thus ask'd himself, the reason why
So wretched was his doom.

Early I rise, and late take rest,
And strain my ev'ry nerve;
Yet still with labour's mead unblest,
I am compell'd to starve.

Kind Providence has far and wide
His richest bounties shed,
Where'er I turn on ev'ry side
A table He has spread.

The clouds with gen'rous fatness drop,
The earth with blessings teams;
Abundance crowns the mountain top,
And through the valley streams.

But midst the land where plenty flows,
Grim famine takes his stand;
With all the retinue of woes,
That wait his stern command.

To solve this hidden mystery,
Mine utmost effort mocks:
It seems a strange anomaly,
A perfect paradox.

Thus pass'd he the long night away,
At dawn his work was done;
And through the snow he hied his way
Unto a neighbouring town.

And there received his wages due,
But shameful was the sum;
He took it, and as he withdrew,
He sigh'd, and thought of home.

Before his eyes did fancy paint
The hardship of his lot;
He saw the havoc frigid Want
Was making in his cot.

He saw his wife suffus'd in tears,
He heard her smother'd sighs;
And harshly grated in his ears
His children's hungry cries.

His hard earn'd crown he quickly spent,
Starvation's work to stay;
And eagerly again he bent
His steps his homeward way.

A transient gleam of joy did light
The weaver's sunken eyes,
As o'er the heath upon his sight
His little cot did rise.

But it was an illusive ray
An ignis-fatuus gleam;
The sunshine of a winter's day,
As fleeting as a dream.

No children now as heretofore
To meet their father come,
No wife is standing at the door
To greet her husband home.

His heart forbode some sad event,
Yet still he knew not why;
He lifts the latch; his wife is bent,
In speechless agony,

Over her first-born child, who lies
Just at the point of death,
Glassy and fixed are his eyes,
And feeble is his breath.

Large drops of cold and clammy sweat
Escape from ev'ry pore;
His pulse has almost ceas'd to beat,
He sighs, and is no more.

That morning hunger in his train
Has brought delirium wild;
The blood rush'd fiercely through the brain,
Of the poor weaver's child.

And destitute of reason's powers,
In incoherent strains,
He raved three successive hours
Of hunger's gnawing pains:

And just before his sire's return,
His strength began to fail;
Less fiercely did the fever burn,
His hectic cheek grew pale.

But who the pungent grief can paint
The parent's breast which fill'd;
When, the sad victim of cold want,
Thus died their loveliest child.

The mother's tender heart was broke,
The storm she could not brave;
She sunk beneath the weighty stroke
Into an early grave.

And thus depriv'd by ruthless Death,
Of those on earth most dear;
The weaver's reason fled beneath
The ban of black Despair.

A prey to all the agony
The mental part can feel;
A raving maniac is he
Within the madhouse cell.

In this abode of wretchedness,
Are all his hopes entomb'd;
The remnant of his hapless race
Are to the workhouse doom'd.

THE NUN.

Serenely clos'd the summer's day,
The sun had thrown his parting ray
Upon the turrit-crown'd wall
Of Gasper's proud baronial hall;
And nature wore its gayest dress,
All, all was joy, all loveliness:

A thousand flowers, of ev'ry shade,
Their variegated tints displayed;
Soft zephyrs on their pinions bore
Sweetest perfumes, in plenteous store:
The feather'd songster's cheering strains
Resounded through the neighbouring plains.
But leave we this enchanting scene,
And turn to what has pass'd within.
There Gasper—once the proud and gay—
Don Gasper on his death-bed lay,
No skill the fatal blow could ward,
No power of medicine retard
The progress of the grizly foe,
Who fast approach'd Don Gasper now.
His soul was filled with dismay,
A misspent life, in dread array,
Rose on his retrospective view;
And conscience, to her office true,
Rung through his ears her thunder-peal,
And in his bosom painted hell.
Close by the dying sinner's side,
There stood a monk, his ghostly guide,
To whom the wretched man confess'd
The guilt which troubled most his breast.
"Be of good cheer," replied the monk,
"Though you in sin are deeply sunk,
Still there is hope: the Church has pow'r
To save in the eleventh hour.
The saints for you will intercede,
The Virgin too your cause will plead;
Her Son their joint request will hear,
And then, my lord, you need not fear.

Unto your Church your substance give,
And you shall in return receive
Full pardon, though your sins were more
Than sands upon the ocean shore."
A sigh escap'd the dying man,
Which seem'd to rend his soul in twain,
And eagerly the monk he eyed,
And, in a feeble voice, replied,
"I have a daughter young and fair,
A child unto this heart most dear:
The thoughts of her give tenfold force
Unto this overwhelming curse,
Which Heaven has justly laid on me,
From affluence to penury.
O, shall my child at once be hurl'd,
To traverse this unfeeling world,
With no protector, none to guide
Her feeble bark o'er life's rough tide?
Hard as this callous bosom is,
I cannot bear the thoughts of this."
"Your sins are great," the monk replies,
"And great must be the sacrifice.
Think on your soul's eternal state,
And how can you thus hesitate?
My lord, before yon setting sun
Again shall gild the horizon,
'Tis more than probable, you may
Become a lifeless lump of clay:
Ere midnight's sable veil be spread,
You may be number'd with the dead:
E'en now, the death-sweat dews your face,
Then, O, partake the Church's grace.

What will it boot you, when your soul
Shall in eternal torments roll?
What will it boot you, then to know
A crown adorns your daughter's brow?
'Twill not impart one ray of hope,
One moment's torment 'twill not stop;
One drop of bliss it will not throw
Into the lake of endless woe.
Doubtless, to you, your child is dear,
But leave her to the Church's care:
The lady-abbess, good Gertrude,
Head of the holy sisterhood,
Will take her 'neath her roof, where she,
From this vain world's allurements free,
In solitude, calm and serene,
Shall shun the gilded baits of sin;
And, by her prayers, assist her sire
To pass the purgatorial fire."
Gasper's distorted visage spoke
The anguish which his heart-strings broke;
His quivering lip and fever'd eye
Express'd his mental agony,
Whilst to this exhortation he
Was listening, with avidity.
When finish'd, he again express'd
The pangs still burning in his breast—
"But shall my child," continued he,
"Partake the punishment with me?
I am the guilty, I alone,
But thou, my child, what hast thou done?
Let all Heav'ns vengeance fall on me,
But let the innocent be free."

"Be calm'd," replied the monk, "your child
Will to her lot be reconciled:
She loves her father, and will prove
The firmness of her filial love,
By sacrificing all beneath,
To save you from eternal death.
Delay no more, here is the deed,
Subscribe it, ere life's brittle thread
Be snapp'd in twain, and you shall find
Your soul to quenchless fire consign'd."
Thus ended he his artful strain:
The parchment was produc'd, the pen
Was plac'd in Gasper's nerveless hand,
And, half consenting, half constrain'd,
Scarce legibly his name he trac'd,
And to the deed his signet plac'd.
The monk absolv'd the dying man,
Pardon'd his every guilty stain,
Save venials, which would but require
A march through purgatorial fire
To cancel them, and make him pure,
And of eternal life secure.
The tide of life now ebbed fast,
Each pulse beat feebler than the last,
At length, the awful moment came,
Extinct became the vital flame.
With pompous funeral parade,
His corpse was to the tomb convey'd,
But none lamented him; no tear
Of grief bedew'd Don Gasper's bier,
Save those of filial love, which fell
Fast down the cheeks of Isabel.

His daughter, now an orphan left,
Of her inheritance bereft,
Thus, destitute and friendless, she,
Compell'd by stern necessity,
Retir'd, her wretchedness to wail,
Into the nunn'ry's gloomy cell.
There time brought her some slight relief,
And smoothed down her poignant grief
To resignation, but her cup
Of woe was not yet filled up.
As forth she walked from her cell,
One evening, when the vesper bell,
Announced the solemn hour of prayer,
She, by a taper's feeble glare,
Which through the arches dimly shone,
In monk's attire, observed one
Pacing the aisle, with cautious tread:
And, at the sight, the timid maid
Would have retired to her cell,
Had not the name of "Isabel"
Been softly sounded in her ear,
In accents not quite strange to her.
And thus the speaker she address'd,
With indignation unsuppress'd,—
"Say, father Ambrose, if 'tis you,
What dark design is in your view,
That you presume thus to intrude?
Your presence augurs me no good;
Away, thou hypocrite, most base,
No more pollute this sacred place."
"Hold!" cries the monk, "dear Isabel,
Those groundless fears, I pray, expel;

It is your welfare that I seek,
Then calmly listen while I speak.
You know the time approaches now,
When you must solemnly avow
That you renounce, for evermore,
The world with all the endless store
Of pleasures, every moment new,
Which freely it presents to you!
To one so young, of rank elate,
To be thus, by relentless fate,
Doomed to drag out existence here,
Must be a sentence most severe.
But, dearest maid, it need not be,
'Tis not too late, you may be free:
I still the document retain,
Which gives your father's vast domain
Unto the Church; and if your will
Shall so dispose you, you may still
Unto your birthright be restored;
You know the terms; then speak the word."
"Yes! villian! fiend incarnate! yes!"
Replied the maid, "your terms I guess,
For 'tis impressed upon my mind,
That you from childhood have design'd
Me as the victim of your lust.
I bear in mind the countless host
Of stratagems, which you have brought
To aid you in your hellish plot;
But still my answer is the same,
As when at first you dared to name
Your guilty passion: I am yet
Resolved never to forget

My duty to myself and God.
I still will tread heaven's narrow road,
Though you, who ought to be my guide,
With hell unite to turn aside
My feeble feet; yet still will I
Upon Omnipotence rely,
And in His strength pursue my course,
In spite of you, and all hell's force.
You may in peace possess the lands
You wrenched from my father's hands:
I freely can resign the gold,
Which you from me unjustly hold;
But I my conscience dare not stain,
Ten thousand thousand worlds to gain:
Then, I repeat, depart from hence,
Or tremble for the consequence."
"Tremble?" exclaimed the monk, "weak maid,
Shall I a feeble woman dread?
No, silly damsel, it is you
Your headstrong stubbornness may rue!
Since you despise my counsel thus,
And dare my offers to refuse,
I leave the place at your request,
But my revenge shall never rest,
Till it is glutted, and I go
To lay my plan of vengeance now."
Again repeated he his threat,
And from the place made his retreat,
Whilst, in a cell, the lovely maid
Applied to Heaven's high throne for aid;
And He who succours the distress'd,
Imparted comfort to her breast:

Such solid comfort as is known
To conscious innocence alone.
She knew He was a gracious God,
Though darkness might be His abode;
And was resolv'd in Him to trust,
Whose ways she knew were ever just;
And on her pallet she reclin'd,
Unto His holy will resign'd,
And slept, from fear of danger free.
But scarce had morning dawn'd, ere she,
Weigh'd down with sorrow's pond'rous load,
Before the Inquisition stood,
Accused of heresy most foul,
And damnable unto the soul.
Before this dread tribune alone,
She, innocent, the hapless one,
Breath'd out a silent prayer to Heav'n,
That grace from thence might now be giv'n,
To bear her through the trying scene;
And the assurance she was in
The hands of an Almighty friend,
The spirits of the maid sustain'd.
She, with composed demeanour, heard
The charge the wily monk preferred,
Who thus commenc'd: "It grieves me sore,
My heart is pierced to its core,
That it becomes my duty thus,
At this tribunal, to accuse
Don Gasper's daughter, Isabel.
No language can my sorrow tell,
When I have to avouch, that she
Is tainted with rank heresy.

She holdeth creeds oppos'd to those
The Church infallible doth choose
To teach her children. I have long
Had my suspicions deep and strong:
Now facts have come before my view,
Which prove all my surmisings true.
O, yes! most reverend Fathers, yes!
You may imagine my distress,
When I, in mine official right,
Enter'd the maiden's cell last night,
And found therein this cursed book—
Just at its odious title look—
'The Works of Luther.'—Works of hell!
Excuse me, if mine ardent zeal
Impell'd me o'er the boundary
Prescribed by christian charity;
But I must say, I fear she has
Drank very deep, too deep, alas!
Of this foul stream. I have no hope
That any earthly power can stop
The dire effects of the dread draught
Of mental poison she hath quaff'd.
Most reverend Fathers, take the book,
O'er its blasphemous pages look,
And on each margin you will find
Some pencil mark, by her design'd
To testify that its contents
Accord with her own sentiments.
With facts like these before our eyes,
No doubt can of her guilt arise;
I would incline to mercy's side,
But mercy here were misapplied;

The welfare of the sisterhood,
Our duty to the Church and God,
With one imperious voice demand
Implicit justice at our hand."
The maid no longer could control
The feelings which, within her soul,
Were hitherto in silence pent;
And thus in words they now found vent.
"False perjured villain! you have now
Fully perform'd your fiend-like vow
Of vengeance on my guiltless head:
But still, your power I will not dread,
Though you your cruelty may stretch
To its full length, it can but reach
To this frail life; and still I feel,
With me at last it shall be well."
"Silence!" cried out the president,
"Our precious time must not be spent
In hearing you, vile girl, accuse
The pious father Ambrose thus.
Was not your guilt enough before,
But you must make it tenfold more?
Dare you your conscience deeper stain,
By slandering this holy man?
Retract your words, your guilt confess,
Acknowledge all your wickedness:
Retrace the steps which you have run,
By penance for your crimes atone,
And we with lenity shall deal,
And, as you say, it may be well."
"I have no guilt that I would hide,"
Again the virtuous maid replied,

"Conscience aquits me; I have not,
Either in deed, or word, or thought,
Apostatiz'd. I once more
Repeat what I avow'd before,
That I am falsely charged by
The father Ambrose, and if I
Am to the flames consign'd, yet still,
In death's last agony, I will
Assert my innocence, nor fear
That God my dying hour will cheer."
Whilst fury from his eye-balls flamed,
Again the president exclaimed,
"She still is stubborn, we of course
Must see what may be done by force;
Then bear her hence, try if the rack
From error's paths shall bring her back."
The order strictly was obeyed,
Ere one short hour its circuit made:
The noble-hearted Isabel
Is dragged to the infernal wheel;
But still unmov'd, no sign of dread
Was by the heroine betray'd:
Hope still beam'd brightly in her eye;
Her breast deign'd not to heave a sigh;
The muscle of each feature stood
Composed and firm; the vital flood
At its accustom'd pace still ran
Through every artery and vein;
Whilst scorn, contempt, and insult base,
Were offer'd by the brutal race
Of bigots, gathered round the place;
And, foremost in the fiend-like band,

The father Ambrose took his stand.
His heart with exultation beat,
Now he thought his revenge complete.
His joy yet reach'd a higher point,
When, dislocated, every joint
Of Isabel was racked with pain,
Greater than nature could sustain.
She groaned,—those groans appear'd to him
Sweet as the song of Seraphim.
Again he urged her to confess
Her many grievous heresies.
"Oh, no!" she cried, with feeble breath,
"I have maintain'd the Roman faith
Until this hour: but I must now,
In presence of you all, avow
That I believe not He, whom love
Constrain'd to leave his realms above—
Christ the Eternal Son, who gave
His life a dying world to save—
I dare not hope that he will own
A Church, whose chief foundation-stone
Is laid in violence and blood:
This cannot be the Church of God."
A thousand voices in one breath,
Now cried aloud, "Put her to death,
Who thus blasphemes our holy Church,
Erect the pile, and light the torch."
The deed was done as soon as said:
The torch was lit, the faggots made,
The victim fastened to the stake:
And soon the flames around her break,
And now their smoke ascends on high,

And with them carry to the sky
The sainted soul of Isabel:
Whilst one continu'd hideous yell
The crowd send forth, and 'neath their tread
They crush the ashes of the maid.
The monk exclaims, "Thus perish all
Who impiously shall dare to call
In question doctrines, which have stood
For ages 'gainst the mighty flood
Of heresy, and still shall stand,
Till Time shall from his palsied hand
Let fall his scythe: not earth, nor hell
Against our Church shall e'er prevail."

ABRAHAM OFFERING UP ISAAC.

The word of God-Jehovah came
Unto His servant Abraham,
And thus he spake: "Rise, take thy son—
He whom thou fondly dotest on—
Rise, take thine Isaac, quickly rise,
And offer him in sacrifice
To Me, upon a mount which I
Will tell thee of, nor ask Me why
I should require this at thine hand:
'Tis thine t' obey when I command."
And did the aged Patriarch hear
A requisition so severe,
And not make one attempt to move
The pity of the God of love?
Did he, who had so boldly sued
For mercy on the multitude

Of sinful, vile, degraded men,
Who had their dwellings on the plain,
Where Sodom and Gomorrah stood—
Did he not thus plead with his God:
"O Thou who hast created us
In Thine own image, dost Thou thus
Require me, to imbrue mine hands
In my son's blood? Are Thy demands
So positive and absolute,
That Thou wilt take no substitute?
The costliest sacrifice shall be
Offered most willingly to Thee.
My flocks, mine herds, mine all I give,
But spare my son, let Isaac live;
Whom Thou hast promised should be
The father of a progeny
As countless as the stars. But, Lord,
Was it, in very deed, thy word
Which sounded in mine ears? Has not
Some demon this delusion wrought,
To tempt me to commit a deed
That would to my destruction lead?"
Did Abraham reason thus? O, no!
He knew the voice, and said, "I go,
Thy mandates freely I obey."
Nor did he seek the least delay;
He rose next morn before the sun
His daily journey had begun;
And hasted on the way which led
Toward the place, where God had said
That he would have the sacrifice.
On the third day he raised his eyes,

And in the distance saw the spot.
In purpose still he waver'd not:
No father's fondness on the way,
Had tempted him to disobey,
Though Isaac was most dear to him,
God in his heart still reign'd supreme:
Paternal feelings might not stand
Opposed to Divine command.
The mountain steep he now ascends,
And at his side his son attends.
What are the father's feelings now,
When they have gain'd the mountain's brow,
And Isaac thus accosts his sire:
"Behold here is the wood for fire,
And all things else requir'd; but say,
Where is the lamb thou hast to slay?"
Did no repining thought arise,
No tear bedew his aged eyes,
No murm'ring sigh escape his breast,
When by his Isaac thus address'd?
No, calmly he to him replied,
"God will himself a lamb provide.
In order lay the wood, and bring
The cord to bind the offering."
The father's word the son obey'd,
The cord was brought, the wood was laid,
Isaac is firmly bound, and now
The knife is rais'd to deal the blow:
Ready to drop. But ere it falls,
A voice from heav'n to Abraham calls.
These words the fatal blow restrain'd:
"Upon the lad lay not thine hand:

By thine obedience I have prov'd
That I by thee am much belov'd;
Isaac shall live, and in his seed
Shall all the earth be bless'd indeed."
Abraham look'd round, and midst the thorns
Beheld a ram caught by the horns;
Isaac was freed, and in his stead
The ram was on the altar laid.
God spared Isaac, but his own
Co-equal, co-eternal son
He freely gave, to die for all
Who were polluted by the fall.
Searching the universe around,
No substitute for Him was found.
A ram sufficed in Isaac's place;
But to redeem the human race
Ten thousand hills in vain might bring
Their cattle for an offering.
Useless would be all Ophir's gold,
In vain Goncoldah might unfold
The gates of her deep treasury:
All this would but as nothing be.
The guilt of man was such a load,
That none but the incarnate God,
Array'd in all his pow'r and love,
Could the enormous weight remove.
We marvel that the Patriarch could
Endure to shed his Isaac's blood;
And that the son should passively
Submit by Abraham's hand to die.
But when the Father sent His Son
For man's offences to atone;

And when the Son His crown laid by,
And cloth'd in flesh the Deity;
And when the Lord of earth and heav'n
Into the hand of death is giv'n,—
O, when we think of love so great
Then our amazement is complete.

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

"Go, search among'st yon men of might,
Ye servants of the Hebrew king;
Bring out a man with me to fight,
The choicest of your army bring.

"In warrior garb be he array'd,
Let his equipments be complete;
In strongest armour be he clad,
Arm'd at all points from head to feet.

"Whatever prowess he may boast;
However high his fame may be;
Yea, let the mightiest of your host
In single combat fight with me.

"If he shall conquer me, then we
To Israel's yoke our necks will bow;
But ye shall all our bondmen be,
If I shall overcome my foe.

"Go through your ranks, the champion seek,
And I defy him and your God."
Thus did Gath's mighty giant speak,
As he in front of Israel stood.

The stoutest hearts began to fail;
The bravest hero quak'd with dread:

The countenance of each turn'd pale;
Courage from every bosom fled.

Not one from Israel's ranks appear'd,
In answer to the giant's call:
Though for three days his voice was heard,
Bidding defiance to them all.

Dismay was seen in every tent,
Till Jesse's son, sent by his sire,
Into the camp his footsteps bent,
His brethren's welfare to enquire.

He heard the proud Philistine's boast,
As he toward the camp drew nigh:
He heard him challenge Israel's host,
And Israel's mighty God defy.

Although a shepherd from his birth,
And to the battle's din unused,
Against this terror of the earth,
He felt his indignation rous'd.

Saul's armour he declines to wear;
The Lord of hosts is his defence;
Useless to him are sword or spear,
His trust is in Omnipotence.

He on his God for help relied;
And in his hand a sling he took:
The shepherd's scrip, hung at his side,
Contain'd five pebbles from the brook.

Impregnable in strength divine,
Thus simply arm'd did he advance
Toward the boasting Philistine,
Who cast on him a scornful glance.

"Am I a dog," he asks, "that thou,
Imprudent boy, thus com'st to me?
Go to thy trembling comrades, go,
And, with them, from my presence flee.

"Or I, by Dagon's temple, swear
The vultures shall make thee their food;
The beasts shall on thy carcase fare,
And have their thirst quench'd with thy blood."

The youth replied, "Vain foolish man,
Thou dost on sword and spear rely;
And thou shalt find such weapons vain,
This day thou by my hand shalt die."

He sends the death-wing'd missile now,
And hissing through the air it flies;
Sinks deep into the giant's brow,
And on the ground his carcase lies.

Proving that man, at best, is dust,
Thus did the proud Philistine die,
Who made his brazen shield his trust,
And dar'd to Israel's God defy.

And still, though hand in hand unite,
God's vengeance we may not retard:
He who is infinite in might,
Will punishment to sin award.

Then, while he yet prolongs his grace,
Let us our feeble weapons ground,
And humbly turn and seek his face;
And he by us will yet be found.

But if we still persist in sin,
God will his fearful form assume;

And we shall, like this Philistine,
Be call'd by him to meet our doom.

And thou, weak Christian, here may'st learn
That saints are God's peculiar care;
Thy safety shall be his concern,
Whatever danger may appear.

Though all the hosts of earth and hell
Unite to stop thee in thy course;
They shall in vain thy soul assail,
God will repel their utmost force.

By weakest instruments, he will
The strongest adversaries crush:
He by a word their rage can quell,
And all their loudest boastings hush.

Thou, with thy sling and stone, may'st meet
The foulest fiend from Satan's den:
He to his cave will soon retreat,
And thou the victory shalt gain.

THE THREE HEBREW CHILDREN.

On Dura's spacious plain, behold,
An image stands of massive gold;
Obedient to the king's command,
A countless host, from every land
That owns the Babylonian sway,
Are congregated now, that they
May to the senseless Idol pay
That adoration due alone
Unto the high and mighty One.
Hark! mid the vast deluded crowd

An herald's voice proclaims aloud,
"It is the king's command, that all
Before the image prostrate fall,
At whatsoever time they hear
The sound of cornet, dulcimer,
Harp, sacbut, flute, and psaltery:
And whoso disobeys, shall be
Into the fiery furnace thrown
And for his crime by death atone."
A shout of rapture, loud and long,
Ascends from the assembled throng,
To show their approbation: when
Is heard the music's lofty strain.
And now, with one accord, behold,
They bow before the god of gold.
But midst the concourse, mark those three
Who, though they know the king's decree
Is irrevocable, yet they
The royal mandate disobey;
Nor bend the knee, nor bow the head,
Nor vengeance of the monarch dread.
Before the king now see them stand,
Charg'd with contempt of his command;
Who thus accosts them:—"Is it true,
That you have disobey'd me? you
To whom such favours I have shown,
Whom I have raised so near my throne?
O! base ingratitude! yet, still,
In spite of your offence, I feel
Reluctant to inflict on you
The punishment so justly due.
Then, when the music shall once more

Warn you as you were warn'd before,
If you are ready at the call
To bow as bow the princes all,
Then I e'en yet your life will spare:
If not, most solemnly I swear
That you shall die the self-same hour;
And none shall from my mighty pow'r
Deliver you. No, I defy
Demon, or man, or Deity."
The youths reply, "We serve the God,
Who spread the azure sky abroad,
Who form'd the ocean and the earth.
We have been trained from our birth
To worship Him who rules on high,
The God of spotless purity.
To Him then only will we bow;
Thou hearest our decision now:
We fear thee not, O king, though thus
With instant death thou threaten'st us;
The God thou darest to blaspheme
Has host on host of Cherubim,
Ready to fly at his command,
And save us from thy cruel hand.
But if, in wisdom infinite,
The sovereign King of kings see fit
That we should glorify His name
By martyrdom, then, midst the flame,
Our hearts and voices we will raise
Exultingly to sing His praise."
The furious king cries out, "Base slaves!
Woe be unto the man who braves
Mine indignation. Shall a king,

To whom such mighty nations bring
Their offering—shall he receive
Such insults,—and the culprits live
Who offer them? No! by the throne
Which I have rais'd in Babylon,
Vengeance shall have its utmost fill.
Then know, ye princes, 'tis my will
These men be cast into the fire,
That I may quench my kingly ire
By seeing such base miscreants die,
Rack'd with intensest agony."
Whilst scoffing foes are gathering round,
The holy Hebrew youths are bound,
And borne towards the fatal spot.
Still their demeanour alters not,
Faith—holy faith—illumes each eye,
Hope hushes every rising sigh,
And Love's benignant smile is seen
Upon each countenance serene.
Into the furnace they are thrown:
And now the God they serve makes known
His power to save; for, lo! the men
Who take them up, the fire has slain;
Whilst those they thought to put to death,
Walk midst the furnace free from scathe.
The wonder-stricken king exclaims,
"Did we not cast into the flames
The three offenders firmly bound?
Whence is it, then, that four are found,
Now walking midst the furnace free?
And, lo! the fourth appears to be
No earth-born being, but the Son

Of Him who sits on heaven's high throne,
Who has descended from above,
That he may to all nations prove
That He is God, and has the power
To save his servants in the hour
When foes the mightiest assail,
And every other help shall fail."
"Come forth, then, O ye faithful three,
And from henceforward ye shall be
The chiefest rulers in the land,
And I, by my decree, command
That every nation, kindred, tongue,
Language, or people, who belong
To my dominions, shall revere
The mighty God the Hebrews fear."
Thus God of old His power made known,
And still, from his exalted throne,
He stoops to hear His children's cries,
And to their succour swiftly flies.

THE PRODIGAL SON.

Far, far from his own native land,
And far from the home of his sire;
Behold the poor Prodigal stand,
In tatters besmeared with mire.

With remorse his heart strings are rent,
While musing on seasons bygone,
When he spurned his father's restraint,
And owned no will but his own.

But hear him soliloquize thus,—
"A madman, I surely must be,
My father's control to refuse;
The kindest of fathers was he!

"But I was a thorn in his side,
His laws I would never obey,
His precepts serv'd me to deride,
His counsels were all thrown away:

"My measure of guilt to complete,
I left his hospitable home;
And recklessly turned my feet
In mazes of folly to roam.

"I took half his substance with me,
Which all has been wasted in sin;
And when 'tis too late, I can see
How vile mine offences have been.

"O, what a sad change has been mine!
Brought up with the tenderest care:
But now, I'm a feeder of swine,
And such as they eat is my fare.

"And soon I must perish for want
Of that which my life should sustain;
And daily I make my complaint,
But all my complainings are vain.

"For not one kind friend have I found
To give me a morsel of bread;
Deep sorrows encompass me round,
Their billows run over my head.

"These pangs I no longer can bear,
For Hope—that bright Seraph—is gone;
And left me a prey to despair,
For ever my lot to bemoan.

"Yet, still, if my father but saw
His son in this desperate state,
Perchance I his pity might draw—
I know his compassion is great.

"The servants that dwell in his house,
Have all bread enough and to spare;
And I will mine energies rouse,
And unto my father repair.

"These swine-cotes I'll instantly quit,
And, just as I am, I will go;
And prostrated bow at his feet,
My depth of contrition I'll show:

"My sins I'll confess, and will say,
'I seek not a place as thy son,
But for thy forgiveness I pray,
Though black are the deeds I have done.'"

Behold the poor wanderer now,
His face toward his once happy home,
His footsteps are feeble and slow,
His brow over shadowed with gloom.

But cheerlessly, cheerlessly, still,
The way to his home he pursues;
And slowly he wanders on, till
The house of his father he views.

At the sight he is sorely distress'd,
His eyes are suffused with tears;
Compunction is rending his breast,
The wrath of his father he fears.

His father the penitent sees,
And knows his repentance sincere,
And hastens his anguish to ease,
And wipes from his eyes every tear.

"My father," the wanderer cries,
"Thou know'st for my sins now I grieve,
But ere from thy feet I arise
Oh, tell me that thou canst forgive.

"Once more shew thy pity to me,
I have but one favour to crave,
'Tis that in thy house I may be
Made equal to thy meanest slave."

The father looked on him, and said,
"Ye servants obey my command;
In the best of my robes be he clad,
Let a ring encircle his hand,

"And let shoes be put on his feet;
Prepare him a plentiful feast,
His friends round the table shall sit,
And welcom'd shall be ev'ry guest.

"This day shall with pleasure be crowned,
With pleasure unmingled with pain,
My son has been lost, and is found,
Was dead, and he liveth again."

Poor sinner! 'tis thou art the man
Who far from thy Father hath strayed;
And happiness sought to obtain,
Where happiness may not be had.

The pleasures of sin thou hast tried,
But found that they ended in pain;
They but for a moment abide,
And still thou hast tried them again.

And now thou thy guilt canst perceive,
Thy sins appear'd blacker than hell;
Thou canst not in pardon believe,
Thou dar'st not for mercy appeal.

Give not thyself up to despair,
God's mercies for ever endure;
Then earnestly seek Him in prayer,
And thou shalt thy pardon procure.

His word—nay, His oath—He has given,
Thy death can no pleasure afford;
Thou never shalt from Him be driven,
If thou would'st by grace be restored.

Then come to Him just as thou art,
And plead the atonement for sin;
From His footstool, O, never depart,
Till he tells thee that thou art made clean.

And gladness and joy shall be found,
'Mongst angels excelling in might;
Whilst praises to God they resound,
Who brought thee from darkness to light.

THE SABBATH.

Wake we, when the sun's first ray
Ushers in the Sabbath-day;
Lift we up our hearts to heav'n,
To our God our praise be giv'n,
For the mercies of the night,
For the blessings of the light:
Be His Name for ever blest,
For the sacred day of rest:
O, let it by us be passed
As if it should be our last.
Worldly thoughts be banish'd far,
Be expell'd each earthly care,
Sensual pleasure, let us deem
But a mere illusive dream.
Walk we now abroad to look
At our God, in Nature's book.
Lift we up our eyes on high,
Gaze we on the concave sky,
On its azure surface, we
Traces of His fingers see!
Silently, the orb of day
Still pursues his onward way:
Now a passing cloud is seen
'Twixt his beams to intervene;
And the earth his absence mourns,
But he soon once more returns;
And his face, again unveil'd,
Has the transient gloom dispell'd.
So his antitype, our God,
May make darkness His abode;

When our souls begin to droop,
Faith grows weak, decays our hope,
'Till, array'd in all His grace,
We again behold His face.
Banish'd by His cheering ray,
All the shadows fly away;
And again our hearts rejoice,
Quicken'd by His heavenly voice.
Now we bend our steps beside
Where the waters smoothly glide
As they, in their ceaseless course,
Urge their passage to their source.
As the rivers be our aim,
Seeking Him from whence we came,
They delay not till they reach
Ocean sand-bestrewed beach,—
Then their parent's verge they lave,
And commingle with the wave.
Thus, the soul that's born of God,
Stops not in his heavenward road:
He will still his path pursue,
Ever keep the end in view,
Turn from vanity his eyes,
Eager to secure the prize:
Ever restless, 'till he come
To his wish'd for peaceful home.
Through the meadows now we pass,
And on ev'ry blade of grass
We a well filled volume see,
Written by the Deity.
Now 'tis flourishing and green,
But ere long it will be seen,

By the scythe's relentless blow,
Withering on the ground laid low.
From the grass, learn we this truth—
In the vigour of our youth,
When we think no danger near,
Death may be close in our rear.
Be we ready then for all
That may youth or age befall;
And, then, whensoe'er we are
Summon'd to the judgment bar,
We shall fear not to attend,
For our Judge will be our Friend.
Leave we now the verdant mead,
On our path let us proceed;
Let us pass those white-wash'd cots,
Whence proceed those sacred notes,
Joyous do the accents seem—
'Tis the Cotter's morning hymn.
Softly floating to the skies,
Sweet as incense doth it rise;
For the Lord delights to hear
Songs of praise from hearts sincere.

Now through the wood our steps we bend,—
  Behold that sturdy oak,
Whose boughs on ev'ry side extend
  Far from their parent stock.

For ages it has bravely stood
  Against the tempest's rage;
Yet still, the glory of the wood,
  It stands unmov'd in age.

And, after each successive storm,
Still deeper strike its roots,
And firmer stands its giant form,
And wider spread its shoots.

So, like the oak, may we despise
Life's most tempestuous blast;
Take deeper root, and higher rise,
And fear far from us cast.

Close from its root the ivy springs,
Its firm adhesion mark,
With what tenacity it clings
Fast to its wrinkled bark.

If unsupported, it must creep,
And in the pathway lie,
Exposed to the careless step
Of ev'ry passer by.

Then, like the ivy, let us seek
For strength where it is found;
For, like the ivy, we are weak,
Apt to cleave to the ground.

Now we leave the wood behind,
Though on ev'ry side we find
Something to protract our stay,
Something that would cause delay.
Now we see the sportive lambs
Skip and gambol round their dams,
As the luscious herbs they crop,
Glittering with the crystal drop
Of the recent genial rain;
Or their mother's teats they drain.

Let us see to it, that we
Of the flock of Jesus be:
He will lead us where there are
Crystal streams and pastures fair;
Where 'tis safely hedged round,
And no rav'nous beasts are found;
Where in peace we may abide,
With our Shepherd at our side.
Groups of children now we meet,
Neatly clad, with aspect sweet;
They no time in trifling waste,
To the Sabbath-school they haste,
Careful not to be too late,
When their loving teachers wait,
To direct them in the way
They must keep the Sabbath-day.
Britain! far above the rest
Of the nations, thou art blest!
Here, in early youth, we learn
What should be our chief concern.
Let us all our mercies prize,
Lest they should against us rise,
And condemn us, in the day
When the Judge, in dread array,
Seated at his awful bar,
Shall to each his doom declare.

Now we ascend the mountain's breast:
  Now we have reach'd its rugged crest,
And stop awhile to gaze upon
  The beauteous scene before us:
All Nature seems combin'd in one,
  To raise a grateful chorus.

To Him who spake, and Nature heard
His sov'reign voice, and light appear'd.
Who bade the lofty mountains rise,
And fill'd the boundless ocean:
Who spread abroad the arched skies,
And gave the spheres their motion.

We listen to the feather'd throng,
Who now pour fourth their morning song
Of gratitude to Him who gave
Them such harmonious voices:
And, as on high their wings they wave,
Each one in turn rejoices.

The dwarfish shrub, and tow'ring pine,
Tell us their Maker is divine;
The broom, bedeck'd with golden flow'rs,
The furze-bush and the heather,
Come and exert their utmost pow'rs,
And sing His praise together.

We listen to the murm'ring rills
Which trickle down these rugged hills,
And fancy that we hear in them
An anthem of thanksgiving,
Which is re-echoed by the stream,
From them its strength receiving.

The tow'ring birds, the bleating flocks,
That range the plains or scale the rocks,
The insect and the reptile throng
Are of His wonders telling:
All join the universal song,
All are the chorus swelling.

The cedar that on Leb'non grows,
The weed that to the zephyr bows;
And from Behemoth to the worm,
Each brings forth his oblation:
They their allotted parts perform,
And answer their creation.

But man—degenerate man—we find
To all God's boundless goodness blind.
Of all God's creatures, man is found
With most ungrateful feeling;
Although with loving-kindness crown'd,
He ever is rebelling.

But hark! we hear the village bells
Soft sounding through the air:
We love to hear their cheerful peals
Announce the hour of prayer.

Then to the temple let us haste,
A precious season this;
Here from the fountain we may taste
Of pure celestial bliss.

See how the rustics throng the way,
Clad in their neatest vest;
With joy they hail the Sabbath-day,
The sacred day of rest.

Rest from the labours of the week,
Rest from its cares and pains;
But yet, a nobler rest they seek—
That rest for them remains.

That rest for ever shall endure;
Its joys shall never fade;

That rest to every one is sure,
Who in Christ's footsteps tread.

But, lo! what crowds we meet, who turn
Their steps from God's abode;
And all His offered mercies spurn,
And run the downward road.

In sensual pleasure's vain pursuit,
This Sabbath will be pass'd;
They think to find delicious fruit,
But find a thorn at last.

We enter now the house of God:
His earthly dwelling-place;
With rev'rence be the threshold trod,
Here He makes known His grace.

That altar, and baptismal font,
In sweetest accents tell,
This is the place where God is wont
His goodness to reveal.

See, on that sacred desk, the book
Of Holy Writ is laid:
Let us unto its Author look,
That we aright may read.

But while to God our songs we raise,
And when our utmost pow'rs
Are all engaged in His praise,
A worthless lay is ours.

But hark! a voice falls on our ears:
The servant of the Lord
A message from his Master bears;
Thus runs the heav'nly word,—

If we imagine we are clean,
And say that we are free from sin,
We but deceive ourselves, for we
Were shaped in iniquity;
And we by deed, and word, and thought,
Have deepest guilt upon us brought.
We further listen to his voice,
And at his tidings we rejoice,
For he exhorts us to confess,
And turn from all our wickedness;
And God is ready to forgive
All we have done, and let us live.
Then in His house let us draw near
The mercy-seat, with hearts sincere,
And there confess our heinous crimes,
Repeated twice ten thousand times.
Tell Him that we have often strayed,
That we His laws have disobeyed,
Counter to His will have run,
Duty we have left undone.
Though to His grace we have no claim,
Yet, in our great Redeemer's Name,
With humble confidence we may
Ask him to take our sins away.
For He, by oath, declares that all
Who, in true penitence, shall call
To Him for mercy, and believe
That He is willing to forgive,
He will attend unto their cry,
And pardon them abundantly.

And, though His temple is all space,
His altar earth, sea, skies;

Yet in His own appointed place
Should our petitions rise.

He loves the places where His saints
By His instruction meet,
And in His ear pour their complaints,
While bowed at His feet.

Yes, he delights in Zion's gates,
He loves her borders well;
Here on the Sabbath-day He waits
His goodness to reveal.

Though in our closets He can hear
And answer our requests,
Yet in His courts must we appear,
'Tis there his presence rests.

Yes, hear him graciously exclaim,—
"Wherever two or three
Shall be assembled in My Name,
I in their midst will be."

How many thousand twos and threes
Are met upon this day:
Yet, in the midst of each of these,
Will he His love display.

And do so many prayers ascend,
And does God hear them all?
Then at His footstool we will bend,
And for forgiveness call.

And now, again, our notes we raise,
To sing our great Creator's praise:
Let us His praise resound.

Unceasing mercies from His hand,
Unceasing thankfulness demand:
  His love exceeds all bound.

From Him existence we derive,
By Him alone we move and live,
  All that we have is His:
For this world's blessings we will bring
To Him our humble offering,
  A worthless tribute this.

But, when we contemplate His grace
In saving man's degraded race,
  In wonder we are lost:
To set polluted worms on thrones,
And deck them with unfading crowns,
  O, what a price it cost!

Silver and gold would be in vain,
A single blessing to obtain;
  But, O, to save a soul,
If we could ev'ry moment count,
Silver and gold beyond amount,
  'Till time should cease to roll,

The sum would but an insult be,
To set one fallen sinner free,
  Or for one crime atone;
For man's salvation never could
Be bought, but by the precious blood,
  Of God's eternal Son.

That Son resigned His heav'nly crown,
And to this lower world came down,
  In human flesh array'd:

Conceal'd the Godhead in the man,
Pass'd through a life of grief and pain,
And suffer'd in our stead.

Shall not such love our praise call forth,
(Though all we have is nothing worth)
For all that He bestows:
Then let our lives our thanks express;
Let us no more His laws transgress,
Nor number with His foes.

While we are here let us begin,
With perfect hatred to hate sin,
And give to it no place;
And, with God's strength, let us oppose
This author of our num'rous woes,
That curse of all our race.

And on this Sabbath-day, let us
God for our only portion choose,
And tread the narrow way;
Though rough and thorny be the road,
It is the path our Saviour trod:
It leads to endless day.

But now our minister expounds
The holy page of Truth,
And sweetly ev'ry sentence sounds,
Each word our grief can soothe.

Let us attend to what he says,
As now we hear him tell,
That through this world's perplexing maze,
'Tis with the righteous well.

'Tis well when on life's boist'rous deep
The waves run mountains high,
And like a drunkard reels his ship,
And leeward rocks are nigh.

The storm may not his bark o'erwhelm,
She never can be lost;
The Pilot stillers at the helm:
He will not quit His post.

Until within the haven sought,
Beyond the billow's swell,
The vessel is in safety brought,
'Tis with the righteous well.

It shall be well when famine grim
Seems coming to his door;
His bread shall still be given him,
His water shall be sure.

It shall be well when on the bed
Of sickness he shall lie,
With tortur'd limb, and weary head,
And fever-flamed eye.

He shall sustain no damage there;
Like gold sev'n times refin'd,
He from the furnace shall appear,
And leave his dross behind.

It shall be well when Satan hurls
His darts in thickest show'rs,
And earth with him her flag unfurls,
And both unite their pow'rs.

The conflict he will surely brave;
Strong weapons he can wield:
The palm of vict'ry he shall wave,
He bears faith's mighty shield.

'Tis well when with his latest foe
He wages mortal strife;
Though to the tyrant he must bow,
He'll rise to endless life.

It will be well when the white throne
Shall in the clouds appear;
And He who takes His seat thereon,
Shall call the nations near.

For he shall hear the cheering word,
"O come up here, thou blest;
Thou faithful servant of the Lord,
Come and enjoy thy rest."

In mansions far above the sky,
For ever thou shalt dwell:
In time and in eternity,
'Tis with the righteous well.

Unto this class do we belong?
Can we these honours claim?
Amongst yon glorious blood-bought throng,
Do we behold our name?

Has true repentance been bestow'd?
Have we bewail'd our guilt?
Have we been wash'd in Jesu's blood,
For us so freely spilt?

Has He a temple in our breast?
Does He within us dwell?
Then we indeed are truly blest,
With us it shall be well.

If we are with the wicked found,
With us 'twill not be so;
For listen to this fearful sound,—
"Woe to the wicked, woe!"

It shall be ill, though night and day
O'er pleasure's field he treads;
He still is in the downward way,
That to destruction leads.

His fancied joys no comfort bring,
His pleasure is but wind,
He looks for honey, but a sting
Is only left behind.

'Tis ill with him, though field to field,
And house to house he lay;
And all his lands their increase yield,
And cloudless seems his day.

When he says to his soul, "Behold,
How plenteous is thy store!
Lo, thou hast heaps on heaps of gold,
I can desire no more.

"Eat, drink, be merry, and enjoy
The pleasure which is thine;"—
Alas his gold proves all alloy,
His silver is but tin.

For now, the messenger of Death
Thus speaketh in his ear,—
"This night thou must resign thy breath,
And leave thy riches here!"

It shall be ill, although his name,
Most legibly, is trac'd
High in the ample book of fame,—
It soon will be eras'd.

Ere long, a graven marble bust
Will speak in mournful strains,
And tell us that a heap of dust
Of him alone remains!

And when the last great day shall come,
And each his Judge shall see;
Then shall he hear this awful doom—
"Depart, depart from me!

"Depart, into that horrid place
Where fire and brimstone burn;"—
And not a distant hope of grace
Shall ever more return.

Then of your wickedness repent,
Your ev'ry sin forsake,
Your souls be with contrition rent;
Of boundless grace partake.

Delay no more, with all your heart
The heav'nly path pursue,
And you shall all these ills avert,—
It shall be well with you.

And now we leave the sacred fane,
And trust we have not met in vain
In this the Lord's abode.
May we all say, with hearts sincere,
"Let Bethel be inscribed here,
This is the house of God."

And as we homeward wend our way,
Forget we not this is the day
Jehovah calls His Own.
With plenteous heav'nly grace endu'd,
O may we feel our strength renew'd,
The christian's race to run.

May thought, and word, and action, be
All, all, in strict conformity
With what our God demands.
With vain terrestrial love unmix'd,
On Him be our affections fix'd,
Whose truth for ever stands.

And, as each moment swiftly flies,
Let us our Sabbath duly prize—
Each hour with blessings teams.
This is a precious day indeed;
In greenest pastures now we feed,
And drink from purest streams.

May we observe the solemn vows
Now made to God, in His own house;
May we their import feel.
Through all the day, through all the week,
Throughout our lives, may we still seek
For grace to do His will.

And now we reach our home again,
And truly we can say,
That none shall serve the Lord in vain,
Or His commands obey.

Like giants well refreshed in wine,
We feel new vigour spring;
And upward mount, by strength divine,
As on an eagle's wing.

Now we are better arm'd to fight
Our inbred enemy:
The world and all the Devil's might,
We in God's name defy.

The meanest office we prefer
Within God's earthly courts,
To dwelling in the mansions where
The man of sin resorts.

The temple of the Lord affords
Unspeakable delight;
The place where He His name records,
Is ever fair and bright.

We have been there, and still would we
Within the temple live,—
O could the sinners whom we see,
Our happiness conceive,

They would not thus mis-spend this day
And recklessly pursue the way,
Which none except a madman treads,
That to eternal ruin leads.

The young, with those of riper years,
Unite with those, whose hoary hairs
Tell us that three score years and ten
By them have almost number'd been.
We hear some take His name in vain,
Whose holy day they now profane;
And there we see the ragged group
Who drain the drunkard's pois'nous cup;
Their twinkling eyes, and stagg'ring gait,
And stam'ring speeches indicate
That they have, in libations deep,
Soothed their consciences to sleep.
In wickedness, the fiends below
May not the fiends of earth outdo!
For there another crowd is seen,
Whose temple has the cock-pit been,
In most inhuman sports have they
Sinned these precious hours away;
These all, as if with one consent,
Seem on their own perdition bent.
And have we not some cause to fear,
That even in the house of prayer,
Some with their lips have used words
With which the heart but ill accords?
Woe be to such, for God's pure eyes
Will not look on such sacrifice.
Be it our business then to see,
As oft as we shall bow the knee,
That ev'ry sentence which we speak
Shall from our soul's recesses break;
Lest while we think we may cast out
The almost microscopic mote,

Which may our brother's sight bedim,
We know not of the pond'rous beam,
Which totally excludes the light
From our own weak imperfect sight.

Let us examine if our pray'rs
Have been sincere this day:
Have all vain trifling worldly cares
Been banish'd far away?

Has pure devotion's holy fire
Been in our bosoms felt;
Did all our thoughts to God aspire,
While at His feet we knelt?

And, while we to the temple bring
Our evening sacrifice,
O let our souls, on faith's strong wing,
Be lifted to the skies.

While from our lips our pray'rs shall break,
Be it our only thought,
That ev'ry sentence which we speak,
God in His book will note.

The sabbath sun is sinking now
Behind the mountain's crest,
And sweetly do the moments flow,
As he retires to rest.

O that our sun of life may set
In such a cloudless sky!
Leave we this world without regret,
And rise in worlds on high.

Then, when our earthly sabbaths end,
We shall a rest enjoy;
And an eternal sabbath spend
Where bliss knows no alloy.

THE BEATITUDES.

"BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT, FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN."

How blessed are the poor in spirit,
O, what an heritage is theirs!
For they through their Redeemer's merit
Are of the heavenly kingdom heirs.

Though they by men may be despised,
And worthless in their own esteem,
Yet they in God's account are prized,
They ever are most dear to Him.

They oft will find their souls depressed,
With doubts and fears their heartstrings rend;
Yet Jesus has pronounced them blessed,
And they can on His word depend.

Ere long shall cease their souls depression,
Their doubts and fears shall all remove;
And they shall be in full possession
Of their inheritance above.

Soon, very soon, shall they be wearing
The crown bought by their Saviour's blood;
And they the sceptre shall be bearing,
Seated at the right hand of God.

"Blsssed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

Blessed are they who now are mourning,
Who for their sins are fill'd with grief;
They have on every side been turning—
But fruitlessly—to find relief.

Their wickedness they are bemoaning,
Its load is more than they can bear;
Beneath the burden they are groaning
The helpless victims of despair.

Guilty they themselves, and wretched,
Expos'd to God's most righteous wrath;
But faintly see His hand outstretched,
To point them to the narrow path.

Blessed are they, for God is willing
His pardoning mercy to bestow;
His face He soon will be revealing,
And peace into their hearts shall flow.

Their own good works they have been trying
Their deep distress to mitigate,
But now to Christ are they applying,
And humbly at His footstool wait.

And here shall comfort be imparted,
For here the balm of Gilead grows;
'Tis here that for the broken hearted—
The healing stream for ever flows.

And soon shall vanish all their sadness,
And joy shall in their bosoms spring;
And they with unalloyed gladness,
The noblest notes of praise shall sing.

"BLESSED ARE THE MEEK, FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH."

Blest are the meek—supremely blest—
  Their joy is ever blooming;
When others would their peace molest,
Each angry feeling is supprest,
  Soon as it is forthcoming.

They pay not evil in its kind,
  Nor railing give for railing,
To pity evermore inclin'd:
And charity has made them blind
  Unto another's failing.

Blest are the meek, for God will dwell
  With those of humble spirit;
To them will He His love reveal,
And with the meek it shall be well,
  They shall the earth inherit.

All that on earth is truly good
  By them shall be possessed;
And patiently they tread the road
Which their forerunner Jesus trod,
  He who has called them blessed.

Though they have neither house nor land,
  They let not these things grieve them;
Their murmurings are all restrain'd,
They know their times are in the hand
  Of One who will not leave them.

Earth's gilded pleasures are to them
  But things to be despised:

They seek not to inscribe their name
Upon the pinnacle of fame—
Such honours are not prized.

Whilst they possess the earth, they know
'Tis not their place of resting;
They are but pilgrims here below,
But earth by them must be past through,
And onward they are hasting.

And when their heritage beneath
Is from their sight receding,
They by the piercing eye of faith,
Can see the gloomy vale of death,
To endless life is leading.

"BLESSED ARE THEY THAT DO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS, FOR THEY SHALL BE FILLED."

Happy are they who fain would be
On heavenly manna feeding;
Who thirst the living streams to see
Forth from God's throne proceeding.

They for the righteousness of Christ
Unceasingly are panting,
But that by Pharisees so prized
They have not nor are wanting.

With hunger's pangs their spirits faint,
They seek for food nutritious,
To God they bring forth their complaints,
And he will be propitious.

Blessed are they, for they shall soon
With righteousness be filled;
And where the living waters run,
To them shall be revealed.

And they shall be refresh'd, and find
That they in grace are growing;
And solid settled peace of mind
Shall in their breasts be flowing.

Their faith shall mightiest mountains move,
Their hope be ever blooming;
And pure disinterested love
Their path shall be perfuming.

Made strong by such substantial food,
They cheerful shall be treading
The narrow, safe, and only road,
To life eternal leading.

"BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL, FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY."

Blessed are they within whose breasts
Mercy unveils her face;
Where pure compassion ever rests,
And pity finds a place.

Never in haste to seek redress
For wrongs which they receive:
And when a foe is in distress,
Are ready to relieve.

They can with confidence appear
Before the heavenly throne;
God will their supplications hear,
And send them answers down.

They can before His footstool bend,
And say, as we forgive
Those who against us may offend,
May we Thy grace receive.

Mercy—God's chief attribute—
They for their copy take,
And God will not reject the suit
The merciful shall make.

Mercy on earth they shall obtain,
Their sins shall be forgiven;
God shall expunge guilt's darkest stain
And make them meet for heaven.

"BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART, FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD."

The pure in heart are richly bless'd
Who their impurity have seen;
And earnestly their suit have press'd,
And sought to Christ to make them clean.

And He to them has been most gracious,
Their supplications He hath heard;
His blood has proved efficacious,
And all their stains have disappear'd.

Their God by them shall be discerned,
Yea, they shall all His beauties trace;
By them His secrets shall be learned,
They shall behold His smiling face.

They shall with cloudless eyes discover
That in redemption's wondrous scheme,
He was the sole—the only mover,
And all the praise is due to Him.

Whilst passing through this world as strangers,
To their inheritance on high,
Surrounded by ten thousand dangers,
They see that He is ever nigh.

They follow on where he is leading,
However rugged be the road;
They see the track which they are treading
Is that which Christ before them trod.

And when they reach to Jordan's border,
And all its furious billows swell,
Through them they pass in perfect order,
And see He doeth all things well.

And when the other side is gained,
They shall behold Him face to face;
And see that all they have obtained
Is by His free unbounded grace.

"BLESSED ARE THE PEACE-MAKERS: FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE SONS OF GOD."

Blessed are they who ceaseless strive,
To quell the strife of others;
Who their most strenuous labours give,
To teach all men in peace to live,
And make them all as brothers.

Oh, how does it their heart strings rend,
To see contending legions,
Each others blood together blend:
Hatred and discord they would send,
Down to the nether regions.

Their every nerve they freely strain,
And seek on all occasions,
To quell the furious rage of men:
They daily pray that peace may reign
In households and in nations.

Ye noble families on earth,
Your lineage is defaulted;
And even ye of royal birth,
Cease ye, from this time and henceforth,
To think your rank exalted.

Though your illustrious ancestry
To Adam might be traced,
Yet boast not of such pedigree,
Nor longer let your scutcheons be
So prominently placed.

A nobler race than yours appears,
Though by the world not named;
Your rank is mean compared with theirs,
They of the heavenly throne are heirs,
God for their Sire is claimed.

And He Himself the kindred owns,
And thus we hear Him speaking;
They shall be my adopted sons,
My tenderly beloved ones,
Who peace on earth are seeking.

The thrones of earth shall pass away,
Earth's honours all are wasting;
But theirs shall never know decay,
Eternally they hold their sway,
Their crowns are everlasting.

"BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH ARE PERSECUTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE, FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN."

Blessed are ye when men revile,
And persecute, and hate you,
And bring forth every fiend-like wile,
Propos'd by violence or guile,
With cruelty to treat you.

Insult and scorn, contempt and wrong,
Shall on all sides assail you,
And slander with her venom'd tongue,
Your train of trials shall prolong,
Your sorrows shall not fail you.

They will attack you day by day,
With malice deeply rooted;
When they would make your souls their prey,
Think it not strange, for thus have they
The prophets persecuted.

The saints of God in every age,
By men have been opposed;
Nor yet exhausted is their rage,
A warfare they with you will wage,
'Till life's last scene is closed.

Yet stedfastly your way pursue,
Though it may grow still rougher;
Yet persevere with vigour new,
And be exceeding glad when you
For righteousness shall suffer.

Be pressing forward in the course
In which you have been trained;

Your heavenward passage bravely force,
For strength apply unto the source
Where it may be obtained.

For each attack be well prepar'd,
Each conflict be endured;
Be vigilant and on your guard,
And rest assur'd that your reward,
In heaven is well secured.

Your sighs be turned into praise,
Your gladness be unblended;
And all your noblest anthems raise,
To Him, whose free unbounded grace
To you has been extended.

PARAPHRASE OF PSALM I.

Blest is the man, whoe'er he be,
Who does from ev'ry vice refrain;
Blest, yea, supremely blest, is he
Who walks not with ungodly men.

He stands not in the sinner's way,
It is the ground he fears to tread;
And if his path through it should lay,
He to his steps gives constant heed.

He sits not in the scorner's seat,
To laugh at those who honour God;
But as a brother he will greet,
All who pursue the heav'nly road.

The law of God is his delight,
  His never-failing source of joy;
Its purity by day and night,
  Does all his waking thoughts employ.

In all his deeds God prospers him,
  And like a tree that takes deep root
Upon the margin of a stream,
  Shall he bring forth abundant fruit.

Though storms at him their fury cast,
  Still flourishing he will be seen;
When winter blows his fiercest blast,
  His leaves are ever fair and green.

But with the wicked 'tis not so,
  For as before the wind we see
The chaff is scatter'd to and fro—
  So shall the lot of sinners be.

For God directs their steps aright,
  Who walk according to his will;
But they who His commandments slight,
  Shall his eternal vengeance feel.

PARAPHRASE OF PSALM C.

O, ALL ye nations of the earth,
  Ye islands that bestud the ocean,
Serve ye the Lord with sacred mirth,
  With gladness mingle your devotion.

With songs of joy, draw nigh
The mercy-seat of God;
Lift up your voices high,
And tell His love abroad.

Our God, Jehovah, is the Lord,
The Holy One is our Creator:
He spake, and by His sovereign word,
He form'd us men from senseless matter.

And, as the shepherd tends
His flock with watchful eye,
So He deliverance sends,
When we for succour cry.

Let us surround His gates with praise,
Our breasts with thankfulness be swelling,
Tune we our hearts to heavenly lays,
When we approach His earthly dwelling.

And let us evermore,
To all around, proclaim
The goodness and the power,
The glory of His name.

For He is gracious unto all,
His loving kindness is unbounded;
And they who for His mercy call,
Shall never, never be confounded.

His truth, ere time began,
Was fix'd immutable;
And firm shall still remain,
When days and years shall fail.

PSALM CIII. *v.* 13.

"LIKE AS A FATHER PITIETH HIS CHILDREN, SO THE LORD PITIETH THEM THAT FEAR HIM."

TENDER are the father's feelings,
More acute than we can show,
Tow'rd his offspring, all his dealings
Ever from affection flow.

In their welfare he delighteth,
Happy he when they are blest;
Their complaints he never slighteth,
Grieves he when they are distrest.

Though his heart be sometimes harden'd,
'Gainst the son his law who spurns;
Yet the rebel child is pardon'd
Soon as he to him returns.

Though a father melts with pity,
It can no proportion claim,
To that which the High and Mighty
Feels for all who fear His Name.

Yet, alas! what doubts assail us,
Oft are we o'erwhelm'd with fears;
Then our confidence will fail us,
Till to help us He appears.

He our path has safely guarded,
With His arm Omnipotent,
He the fatal shaft hath warded
When the bow 'gainst us was bent.

When we wilfully have slidden
From the track mark'd out by Him,
He the sentence has forbidden,
Justly due to such a crime.

His Omniscient eye hath watch'd us
When in error's ways we stray'd;
He from peril oft hath snatch'd us
When no other arm could aid.

He is by compassion moved,
In His dealings to our race;
We ten thousand times have proved
How unbounded is His grace.

When toss'd on life's boisterous billow,
He the tempest's rage hath sooth'd:
When laid on afflictions pillow,
He the thorny couch hath smooth'd.

Oft our foes have been defeated
By His own resistless power;
And His mercies are repeated
Day by day, and hour by hour.

After such unbounded kindness,
How can we so faithless be?
O, how great must be our blindness,
If His hand we cannot see.

If at times He be concealed,
Soon He rends the veil in twain;
Then His goodness is revealed,
And He smiles on us again.

Oft our earthly parents scourge us,
Shall we then repine if God,
From our wickedness to purge us,
May see fit to use the rod?

O, let us, with filial meekness,
In all states His goodness own:
Be our portion health or sickness
Let us say, Thy will be done.

If our fairest hopes be blighted,
Let not this our peace molest;
We are far too feeble sighted.
To perceive what will be best.

All e're long will be adjusted,
Patiently run we our race;
Be our heavenly Father trusted,
When His steps we cannot trace.

Soon our sufferings shall have ceased,
And this mortal frame shall fail;
Then shall we amongst the blessed
Sing, He hath done all things well!

PARAPHRASE OF PSALM LV. *v.* 22.

"CAST THY BURDEN UPON THE LORD, AND HE SHALL SUSTAIN THEE."

Why, fainting soul, beneath a load
Of sorrow dost thou bend?
Why should those tears bedew thy road?—
Oh, cast thy burden on thy God,
And thou shalt be sustained.

If thou with sin art weighed down,
Thyself thou canst not aid;
But though the guilt be all thy own,
Be it upon thy Saviour thrown—
He suffer'd in thy stead.

His blood has power to wash away
Thy crimes, however black,
And be they num'rous as they may,
Or aggravated, yet shall they
Be cast behind His back.

Have all thy earthly hopes been lost
By adverse fortune's blast,
And art thou on life's billows toss'd,
Far distant from thy wished for coast?—
On God thy burden cast.

Does Penury, with niggard hand,
Dole out thy scanty fare?
Thy lot by God has been ordained,
And thou by Him shalt be sustain'd,
Thou ever art His care.

Or is thy burden fell disease,
Which wastes thy feeble frame?
'Tis He can bid thy sickness cease,
And give afflictions' pillows ease,—
Then His assistance claim.

Has Death within thy dwelling been,
And borne some lov'd one hence,
And made thy house a cheerless scene?—
On Him thou may'st for comfort lean,
With firmest confidence.

Does thine infernal foe assail
Thee with his treach'rous arts?
Against thee he shall not prevail,
Still trust in God, He will repel
His hottest fiery darts.

Cast all thy burden on the Lord,
Be it whate'er it may;
For He has pledged His faithful word,
That strength to thee He will afford,
According to thy day.

MATTHEW VI. *v* 34.

"TAKE THEREFORE NO THOUGHT FOR THE MORROW."

BE not careful for to-morrow,
All thy boding fears control;
Why anticipate thy sorrow,
Comfort take, Oh cheerless soul:

For to-morrow be not troubled,
Should thy fears all come to pass,
Then thy sorrow will be doubled,
And more grievous is thy case.

He who hitherto hath watched thee,
With a tender Father's care,
Who from dangers oft has snatched thee,
Will thy Helper still appear.

Oh, observe the cheerful bearing,
Of the songsters of the air;
They, no want or famine fearing,
For to-morrow never care.

See the flow'rets sweetly smiling,
Richer dress'd than Solomon;
It is not by their own toiling,
That they put such vestments on.

Thinkest thou He who supplieth
Meaner things with what they need,
With indifferent coolness eyeth
Adam's blood-redeemed seed.

Be not careful for to-morrow,
Let thy trust be put in Him;
Thou alike in joy and sorrow,
Still art dear in His esteem.

MARK VIII. *v.* 36.

"FOR WHAT SHALL IT PROFIT A MAN, IF HE SHALL GAIN THE WHOLE WORLD, AND LOSE HIS OWN SOUL?"

THE spacious world; what is it worth,
With all its alluring pleasures?
A moment be thy thoughts call'd forth
To weigh its boasted treasures.

Hadst thou an undisputed sway,
The globe's wide surface covering;
Did all earth's kings their homage pay,
And own thee as their sovereign:

If, at thy soul's expense, all this
By thee had been obtained,
Then reckon up the sum which is
By such a barter gained.

The world, with all the glittering toys
Which daily thou art meeting,
Can yield thee no substantial joys—
Its pleasures all are fleeting.

Its honours terminate in shame,
And swiftly fly its riches;
All it can give is but a name,
Each day's experience teaches.

But, Oh! thy soul what is its price?
'Tis past thy calculation;
Ten thousand worlds would not suffice,
To purchase its salvation.

The precious blood of Christ it cost,
To bring it to God's favour;
Vast is its worth; and if 'tis lost,
It will be lost for ever.

For ever lost—alas! poor soul!
To ceaseless torments doomed,
Long as eternal ages roll,
In hell's dark cave entombed.

The vengeance of an angry God,
For ever, ever drinking;
And in the burning fiery flood
Deeper and deeper sinking.

Then, say, what profit canst thou boast,
If thou the world hast gained;
If at thy soul's eternal cost,
By thee it was obtained?

LUKE XIV. *v.* 23.

"GO OUT INTO THE HIGHWAYS AND HEDGES, AND COMPEL THEM TO COME IN, THAT MY HOUSE MAY BE FILLED."

Oh, come unto the heavenly feast,
Ye deaf, and dumb, and blind, and maimed;
You each will be a welcome guest,
Let no excuse by you be framed.

To you the joyful news we bring,
The children and the fathers hoary,
May sup with the eternal King,
The high and mighty Lord of Glory.

To each and every one we call,
Oh come, then, now you are entreated;
The beggar from the dunghill shall
'Mongst greatest potentates be seated.

Upon your husks no longer feed,
When such a banquet is before you;
Do not your own unfitness plead,
A spotless robe shall be thrown o'er you.

Oh come, all ye of Adam's race,
Leave that which now your thought engages,
All you who have no dwelling place,
Except the highways and the hedges.

Ye vilest sinners, ye may come,
To you is sent the invitation,
In heaven there is sufficient room
For every kindred, clime, and nation;

Oh come, then, now, no more delay,
Come, we most earnestly beseech you;
Perhaps, the invitation may
Never again—no, never—reach you.

The door will soon be clos'd; and then,
In the dark caverns of perdition,
Yours will be everlasting pain,
Without one moments intermission.

VERSES

INSCRIBED TO MR. AND MRS. STREET, SUGGESTED BY THE REPEATED INROADS DEATH HAS MADE INTO THEIR FAMILY.

THEY are gone! and if you lament them,
Your sorrow will all be in vain;
'Twas God who in mercy had lent them,
It is He who takes them again.

The stroke under which you are smarting,
You scarce will be able to bear;
We know it is hard to be parting
With those who to you were so dear.

But they are not dead, they are living
Where Death no admission can gain;
And whilst you their absence are grieving,
In glory immortal they reign.

'Twas right you so dearly should love them;
'Tis right you should mourn for their loss;
But God has seen fit to remove them;
Then meekly be bearing your cross.

Oh, may you be ever found willing
To bow to the mandates of God;
He only in love has been dealing,
Though heavy has fallen His rod.

His footsteps may not be discerned,
E'en by the Angelical powers;
Then how can His councils be learned,
By minds so enfeebled as ours.

On the wings of the whirlwind He rideth,
Thick darkness encircles Him round,
His face for a moment He hideth,
Yet He with compassion is crown'd.

You see not what He is designing,
But know that His truth ever stands,
Then strive to repel all repining,
And throw yourselves into His hands.

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